

Swiss cut COVID booster wait to four months

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As concern swells over the highly transmissible coronavirus variant Omicron, Swiss authorities said Tuesday they were shortening the time people vaccinated against COVID need to wait before getting an

additional dose.

The Federal Office of Public Health said early data on the new and heavily mutated Omicron variant indicated that it was better than previous coronavirus strains at dodging vaccine protections, but that a [booster shot](#) could "greatly improve protection".

As a result, it said, "a booster vaccination with an mRNA vaccine is now recommended for everyone aged 16 years and older as early as four months ... after initial immunisation, especially for [older people](#)."

Until now, the country's health authorities had recommended boosters six months after people vaccinated with either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, which use mRNA technology, received their second shot.

And "given expectations that the Omicron variant will spread rapidly, a booster vaccination is also recommended for seriously immune deficient people after three doses of mRNA vaccine for initial immunisation," it said.

Swiss [health authorities](#) also recommended that people who had received the one-dose Johnson&Johnson vaccine receive a booster dose of a mRNA jab after four months.

They said that even after shortening the interval before administering boosters, Switzerland had enough [vaccine](#) doses to provide jabs for everyone who wants them.

Switzerland introduced a string of new restrictions this week in the face of surging infection numbers, including requiring people to work from home and barring the unvaccinated from restaurants, museums and other venues.

The wealthy, Alpine nation of around 8.6 million [people](#) has to date registered more than 11,600 COVID deaths since the start of the pandemic.

Nearly 67 percent of the population is fully vaccinated—a relatively low number compared to other countries in western Europe.

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